

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 L-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 ACDA-10 NEA-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00

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FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2514

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 3419

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 5320

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS 12/31/81

TAGS: MCAP, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO-WP CONVENTIONAL FORCES BRIEFING

REF: USNATO 5074 LIMDIS

BEGIN SUMMARY: US TEAM PRESENTED BRIEFING ON NATO AND WARSAW PACT CONVENTIONAL FORCES TO PERMREPS NOV. 2. CHAIRMAN OF MILITARY COMMITTEE, NOTING THAT BRIEFING ADMITTEDLY DRAWN FROM STILL IN-COMplete STUDY, ADVISED PERMREPS TO REFRAIN FROM REACHING HASTY CONCLUSIONS. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT IMS NOW ENGAGED IN NET COMPARATIVE CAPABILITY STUDY WHICH WILL TAKE ACCOUNT OF US BRIEFING. QUESTIONS BY BELGIAN, UK, AND NETHERLANDS PERMREPS INDICATED GROWING ALLIANCE NEED FOR NATO STUDY BASED ON AGREED ASSUMPTIONS, AND QUERY BY CANADIAN PERMREP SOUGHT TO RELATE BRIEFING TO MBFR UNDERTAKING. END SUMMARY.

1. US TEAM, HEADED BY LTGEN SEITH, PRESENTED BRIEFING ON NATO AND WARSAW PACT CONVENTIONAL FORCES TO NAC PERMREPS NOV 2. ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WERE CHAIRMAN, MILITARY COMMITTEE, AND ADM ASHMORE,
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CINCHAN.

2. AT END OF BRIEFING, SYG LUNS INVITED GEN STEINHOFF, CHAIRMAN, MC, WHO HAD ALSO RECEIVED BRIEFING OCT 29, TO GIVE HIS VIEWS.

STEINHOFF RECALLED THAT THE BRIEFING HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AT THE MC MEETING AT CHIEFS OF STAFF LEVEL IN SEPTEMBER ON THE BASIS OF PRESENTATIONS MADE IN WASHINGTON TO MODS AND STAFFS. HE POINTED OUT THAT BRIEFING WAS PREDICATED ON ONE SCENARIO BASED ON ONE SET OF ASSUMPTIONS; THAT THE SCENARIO CHOSEN WAS NOT PERHAPS THE MOST LIKELY SCENARIO FOR PURPOSES OF DEFENSE PLANNING; THAT THE ASSUMPTIONS USED FOR THE BRIEFING MAY BE INCOMPLETE SINCE AIR BATTLE AND LOGISTICS ASSUMPTIONS WERE NOT INCLUDED; THAT THE USE OF ASSUMPTIONS OTHER THAN THOSE USED IN THE BRIEFING MIGHT MAKE THE CASE MUCH WORSE FOR NATO. STEINHOFF THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE "VERY DANGEROUS" TO TRY TO ARRIVE AT SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUSIONS SOLELY ON THE BASIS OF THE US BRIEFING. HE REPORTED THAT THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STAFF, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE MAJOR NATO COMMANDERS, HAS UNDERTAKEN A NET COMPARATIVE CAPABILITY STUDY WHICH WILL TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF THE US BRIEFING.

3. DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM) BELIEVED THE US BRIEFING HAD MAJOR POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. MATTERS OF NATIONAL SECURITY WERE OF VITAL CONCERN TO INDIVIDUAL ALLIES AND TO THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE. NATIONAL DECISIONS ON SECURITY MATTERS WERE BASED ON THE ADVICE AND ASSESSMENTS OF NATIONAL MILITARY AUTHORITIES. NATO DECISIONS ON ALLIANCE SECURITY WERE BASED ON THE ADVICE AND ASSESSMENTS OF THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES. THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES, THE STAUNCHEST ADVOCATES OF NATO AND OF ADEQUATE FORCES FOR DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE, HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO DEFEND THE NEED FOR MILITARY EXPENDITURES BEFORE THEIR GOVERNMENTS. SOME GOVERNMENTS AND PUBLICS WERE COMPLACENT AND PERMREPS HAD TO CITE THE THREAT AGAINST NATO AS JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR MILITARY REQUIREMENTS. DE STAERCKE POINTED OUT THE DISCREPANCIES IN ASSESSMENTS BETWEEN, ON THE ONE HAND, SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S STATEMENT IN THE JUNE DPC MINISTERIAL AND THE US BRIEFING AND, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ASSESSMENTS OF NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES. HE BELIEVED THE US BRIEFING HAD "DAMAGED" THE CREDIBILITY OF PERMREPS WHO WERE BEING CRITICIZED BY THEIR OWN GOVERNMENTS FOR OUT-DATED SCENARIOS AND ASSUMPTIONS. THE SITUATION, ACCORDING TO DE STAERCKE, WAS DANGEROUS--SINCE SOME ALLIED DEFENSE MINISTERS NOW PERCEIVING AND WELCOME LOWERED SOVIET THREAT WHICH WOULD PERMIT REDUCTIONS

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IN DEFENSE BUDGETS; AND THIS UNDERScoreD THE NEED FOR A NATO ASSESSMENT BASED UPON COMMON ASSUMPTIONS AND SCENARIOS.

4. PECK (UK) AGREED WITH DE STAERCKE. HE CONCURRED WITH STEINHOFF IN THE NEED FOR A NATO STUDY AND OFFERED THE ASSISTANCE OF THE UK'S DEFENSE OPERATIONS ANALYSIS ESTABLISHMENT (DOAE). HE POSED TWO QUESTIONS TO THE US TEAM: A. WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT ON THE BALANCE OF MOBILIZATION TIME SHORTER THAN MPLUS23/MPLUS30, AND B. WHETHER THE CURRENT STUDY WAS THE BASIS FOR THE FOUR SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENTS AREAS PUT FORWARD BY SECDEF AT JUNE'S DPC MINISTERIAL. GEN SEITH RESPONDED THAT OTHER US STUDIES WERE UNDERWAY, INCLUDING ONE WITH A SCENARIO OF A WARSAW PACT SURPRISE ATTACK. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE CURRENT STUDY WAS NOT THE

BASIS FOR SELECTING THE FOUR SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENT AREAS, IT REINFORCES THEIR NEED AND VALIDATES OTHER REQUIREMENTS OF AD-70.

5. SPIERENBURG (NETHERLANDS) ON A PERSONAL BASIS CAUTIONED THAT IT WAS "EXTREMELY DANGEROUS TO JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS ON S STUDY WHICH HAS NOT BEEN FINISHED." HE REFERRED TO THE "ROSY" CONCLUSIONS WHICH HIS MINISTER WAS ONLY TOO HAPPY TO HEAR. UNTIL HE LEFT NATO, HE SAID, HE WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO MAINTAIN DEFENSE SPENDING AND THUS PROTECT THE ARMED FORCES OF THE NETHERLANDS FROM CUTS.

6. MENZIES (CANADA) THOUGHT THE US BRIEFING WAS STIMULATING AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING. HE LAUDED THE US DOD FOR ITS ORIGINAL THINKING. RECALLING THE 700,000-MAN COMMON CEILING PROPOSED FOR MBFR, HE ASKED WHETHER THE US HAD STUDIED THE MINIMUM FORCES REQUIRED TO DEFEND NATO. GEN SEITH REPLIED THAT THE US HAD NOT MADE SUCH A DETERMINATION BUT SUPPORTED THE NATO GUIDELINE THAT MBFR CUTS SHOULD NOT EXCEED 10 PERCENT OF OVERALL ALLIED FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA.

7. MCAULIFFE (US) EXPRESSED THANKS TO DE STAERCKE FOR HIS SAGE ALLUDING TO SPIERENBURG'S COMMENT, HE SAID HE, PERSONALLY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT BRIEFING WARRANTED "ROSY" CONCLUSIONS, BUT THAT IT DID CONVEY IDEA THAT CONVENTIONAL NATO/WP BALANCE WAS NOT ONE OF UNRELIEVED GLOOM. HE TOO BELIEVED BRIEFING WAS STIMULATING AND HOPED IT WOULD STIMULATE ALLIES TO ACTIVITY IN RIGHT AREAS AND MIGHT VALIDATE AD-70 CONCLUSIONS. HE CONCURRED IN NEED FOR EARLY NET CAPABILITY STUDY BY NATO AND EXPRESSED
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8. SYG LUNS THANKED THE US TEAM FOR ITS THOUGHT-PROVOKING PRESENTATION AND ITS INFORMATIVE REPLIES TO QUESTIONS; HE THOUGHT THE BRIEFING HAD CAST VALUABLE LIGHT ON ONE SCENARIO; HE CONCURRED IN THE NEED TO HAVE COMMON ASSUMPTIONS AND TO COME TO COMMONLY-ACCEPTED CONCLUSIONS; HE NOTED THAT EVERYONE PRESENT AGREED IN THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN NATO'S CONVENTIONAL FORCES. HE CONCLUDED BY QUOTING NAPOLEON: "NEVER UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ADVERSARY."

9. COMMENT. TOTAL IMPACT OF US BRIEFING BY LT GEN SEITH AND HIS TEAM WAS POSITIVE. LT GEN SEITH AND MR. WARE EXCELLED IN THEIR ARTICULATE PRESENTATIONS AND THEIR FLAWLESS HANDLING OF PERMREPS' QUESTIONS. AMBASSADOR PECK, WHOSE EARLIER CAREER INVOLVED CONSIDERABLE INTELLIGENCE WORK, PRIVATELY EXPRESSED TO MCAULIFFE HIS ADMIRATION FOR THE KNOWLEDGE, FRANKNESS, AND SKILL DISPLAYED BY BOTH.

10. US BRIEFING, ALTHOUGH BASED ON A STILL INCOMPLETE STUDY, MADE ALLIES AWARE OF IMPRESSIVE US RESOURCES AND SERVED TO BUILD ALLIED CONFIDENCE. BRIEFING OF PERMREPS WAS A LOGICAL FOLLOW-ON TO SECDEF'S JUNE DPC MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS, PRESENTATIONS GIVEN
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BILATERALLY TO CERTAIN MODS AND STAFF IN WASHINGTON, AND BRIEFINGS GIVEN EARLIER IN WEEK TO MILITARY COMMITTEE, SHAPE, AND AFCENT STAFFS. AS SUCH, PRESENTATION TO PERMREPS WAS A BUILDING BLOCK IN US OBJECTIVE TO ENLARGE THE ALLIES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE RANGE OF THE NATO-WARSAW PACT BALANCE. FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT, THE NEXT MAJOR STEPS IN APPROACHING THAT OBJECTIVE WOULD BE CONTINUING US INITIATIVES, AND THE SUBMISSION OF CONVINCING DOCUMENTATION, IN BOTH THE MC NET CAPABILITY STUDY AND NEXT SPRING'S MC-161 CONFERENCE. END COMMEND.
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